

NATIONAL CAPITAL AFFAIRS

Plans for New Public Buildings Are Deferred

WASHINGTON.—The long-pending plans for construction of new buildings for the state, justice and commerce departments, south of Pennsylvania avenue, between Fourteenth and Fifteenth streets northwest, will not be taken up, at the earliest, before the lapse of two more years. Word has gone out to the heads of these departments that congress will not be asked to appropriate for federal construction before 1917.

The reason for this postponement is economy at a time when the treasury is in a depleted condition, together with the prospect that congress will be asked to appropriate for the national defense.

The labor, justice and commerce departments now occupy leased buildings. The two former have complained about their inadequate quarters. The commerce department arranged with private capitalists to erect its present home on a five-year lease at an annual rental of \$65,000.

The tract south of Pennsylvania avenue, between Fourteenth and Fifteenth streets, was bought by congress a few years ago with the announced intention of putting up buildings for three departments. Steps to appropriate for them fell through, however, and since then some of the properties on the tract have been leased by the government by the year.

Lock and Key of Peking Interested These Two

TWO young Chinese men stood before a glass case over at the museum. That the exhibit on its lower shelf had caught the interest of the two was evident from their suppressed excitement of speech and the cars with which one of them copied the information on the accompanying card.

Curiosity is contagious. As soon as the Chinese had passed on another person who had been watching from the fish pond went over to the case. At first sight the exhibit looked like a cistern pump of old and rusty iron, and lying by it another piece of the same ancient metal that might be a sort of lever, say, about three feet long. Its dramatic interest for the Orientals lay in the printing on the card: "Lock and key to the city gate of Peking, known as the front gate, directly opposite the emperor's palace. This gate was taken by the United States marines, August 14, 1900. In the spring of 1900 the perilous situation of the members of the American legation at Peking, and their complete isolation in the midst of a murderous population demanded prompt action for their relief. The commandant, division of the Philippines, was instructed by cable, June 6, 1900, to send at once a regiment of infantry to Taku, and Maj. Gen. Adna R. Chaffee, U. S. V., was selected to command—"

"Please move so we can see." The person who had been reading the card made way for a heavy shouldered, double-chinned, big-waisted young woman in silver-gray crumpled from travel, and freck white shoes that bulged over at the sides like raised dough. And she was clinging to an undersized and obvious bride groom.

When she saw what there was to see the young lady elephant said to her undersized one—with an artless disregard of the fact that other people have ears:

"Lordy, Jim, I thought it must be somethin' worth lookin' at the way that woman was starin'—comerlong." To them the lock and key of the city gate of Peking was only so much rusty, time-worn iron. So, naturally, they turned to metal more attractive. And when the case was clear the Chinese men returned.

New Air Fighting Gun That Shoots Both Ways

A NEW air-fighting gun is undergoing experimental trial by the aviation corps of the United States navy department. It is the invention of Commander Cleveland Davis, U. S. N., and fires a 15-pound shell carrying about one pound of high explosive—enough to blow a flying machine to smithereens or to inflict dangerous damage upon a Zeppelin or other dirigible. Commander Davis is the navy's foremost inventor. It was he who not long ago originated a new kind of torpedo gun which is under consideration by the department.

One remarkable feature of his "aero gun" is that it shoots both ways. For loading, it is "broken" in the middle, where the big cartridge is introduced. In the rear part of the cartridge are packed 15 rounds of buckshot, between which and the projectile is the firing charge of smokeless gunpowder.

When the shell is discharged at the muzzle the buckshot is simultaneously thrown out at the butt end of the tube, which is of the same diameter throughout its length.

The buckshot, needless to say, is not meant to do the adversary any damage. Its discharge merely serves to take up the recoil of the weapon. This, up to the present time, has been the principal difficulty encountered in efforts to solve the problem of the aeroplane gun. To fire large explosive projectiles from a flying machine has seemed impracticable because the recoil of the gun would upset the delicate balance of the warplane, imperiling its safety and that of its navigator.

It is for this reason that nowadays no more formidable weapons than light machine guns, weighing about 20 pounds and firing ordinary rifle bullets, are installed on the armored aces.

Why They Cheered Transfer of George E. Downey

CHEERS on the transfer of George E. Downey from the post of comptroller of the treasury to a place on the court of claims arose from at least one department in which Downey had curtailed expense accounts that were described as verging upon graft. In some instances, it is admitted in the comptroller's office, the apparent "graft" was perfectly regular under the law, but even in these Downey held it to be illegitimate and declined to approve vouchers which technically seemed to be correct.

For example, an army officer stationed in the tropics put in a claim for his "fuel allowance" of \$75 for "heating his home," and threatened the comptroller's office with dire consequences when it declined to honor the bill. Under the law of the United States this officer was entitled to this allowance; under the law of common sense Downey put his foot down.

"This is only one of almost a thousand instances demonstrating the negligence, carelessness and recklessness with which congress passes laws, especially under the army, navy and other appropriation bills," said an official of the comptroller's office.

Also it is said to be "very customary" for an army officer to rent a house for, say, \$40 and charge the government the maximum of \$60, allowed him for his quarters, while some officers' wives are said to rent houses from the real owners and in turn lease them to the government at a higher rate for their own families' occupancy. Many other irregularities also have been exposed under the Downey regime.

So now the alleged beneficiaries of the reported irregularities have cheered the departure of Downey.

POSTSCRIPTS

An Illinois inventor has patented a guitar with two sets of strings on which one person can play duets.

A Massachusetts man has patented a way to wear inside trousers to pads to keep knees from bagging.

An Englishman has invented a fly stinging instrument that works with a trigger and resembles a pistol.

A combination ladder and scaffold with many uses that folds as compactly as a step ladder has been patented.

A Chicago inventor's burglar proof window sash is provided with bars that rise from within the window frame as the sash is lifted.

Ladybirds are of great service to the gardener by reason of their destruction of plant lice, among which they lay their eggs, and as the lady comes to life they feed on the lice.

Water issues from an artesian well on a Georgia farm with sufficient force to light its owner's house and barn with electricity and to give him power for small machinery.

VON MACKENSEN IN NORTHERN POLAND



General von Mackensen, the famous German commander, is here shown touring a small stream in northern Poland to obtain personal observation of a stiff rear-guard action with the Russians.

THRICE IS HERO OF PRISON CAMP

Story of the Deeds of Auguste the Little French Tailor.

NOW HE WANTS TO FIGHT

Three Times He Wrecks Plant Where Asphyxiating Gas Bombs Are Made and Twice Escapes to His Own Lines.

Paris.—It was in Nantes that I met this little man I am going to tell you about, and I think I will tell you the whole incident, just as it happened to me, so that you can see in what a queer, unexpected way one may run against a hero. I found him on the railroad just in a French provisional town in the shape of an under-sized tailor, slightly bald and forty-two years old.

Nantes is one of the twelve cities of France that have statues in the Place de la Concorde, in Paris. One passes through them on the way to and from the coast towns of southern Brittany and, having come from St. Nazaire, I was waiting in the Gare d'Orléans in Nantes for the train to Paris and meanwhile trying to find my porter to see if he had all my luggage gathered in one place.

I found him at the far end of the quai, with my bags at his feet, talking to a young girl wearing the Breton coffee and the wide-sleeved Breton costume.

"Auguste has come," the girl was saying as I approached. "He arrived last night from Paris, and came to our house this morning." My porter touched his cap to me. "Everything is here, monsieur," he said, "and the train will stop directly opposite us on the No. 1 line. This is my sister Madeleine, who has come to tell me about Auguste."

Very Proud of Auguste. "Auguste is our cousin," explained Madeleine, "and he is coming to the station to see my brother. My brother was his favorite when we were children. Here he is now!" she cried. And I turned and saw a group of three advancing along the quai.

A lame girl was on one side and on the other was a tall man in baggy corduroy trousers, while between them was a small man, wearing trousers that were too long for him and a brown sack coat and gray cap. He

KEEPING DOWN HIS WEIGHT



Former President Taft puts in all of his spare time on the golf links in an effort to keep down his weight. He is here seen starting off for the ninth hole.

GETS DIVORCE LEST SHE DIE

Kansas City Woman Facing Operation Feared Husband Would Get Her Money.

Kansas City, Mo.—The uncertainty of the result of a surgical operation was the plea made by Mrs. Grace Eyth for divorce from Adolph J. Eyth, a salesman.

Mrs. Eyth told the court she was about to undergo a serious operation and in the event of her death her hus-

band would receive half of her \$60,000 unless the divorce decree was granted. Judge Johnson granted the divorce.

Farmer Dies, Team Plows On. Reading, Pa.—Two horses plowing without a driver excited the curiosity of John Huber, a Robesonian farmer. Going into the field Huber found the body of his neighbor, Adam Heller, forty-five years old, lying dead in a furrow. He had been stricken at the plow.

had a heavy brown mustache that hung well over his mouth and turned up toward his eyes in great, sweeping curves. A grayish stubble of beard ornamented his cheeks, and when he took his cap off I saw that he was beginning to get bald. He looked not so much like an old man as like one who had recently been through a severe sickness. There were deep lines in his cheeks and myriad little wrinkles around his eyes, while the skin hung loose and flabby on his neck and his complexion was of a grayish pallor.

After the affectionate greetings were over my porter turned to me and said: "This is my cousin Auguste, monsieur. He is just home from Germany."

"Then you are a soldier?" I asked, as I shook hands with him.

"Not yet," he replied. "The government has given me fifteen days' leave before I join my regiment."

"Auguste has done his service," said Madeleine. They were all very proud of their cousin and stood close around him in a little circle.

"But yes," said Auguste, "I did my three years before I went to Germany, and I have been home every year since for my two weeks' training. I was just coming home last year when the war broke out, and they made me a prisoner."

"Oh," I said. "So you have been in one of the internment camps."

Auguste is a Prisoner. "It is so, monsieur," he replied. "Three days before war was declared they took me and all the other Frenchmen and made us prisoners in a camp."

"Before war was declared?"

"But yes, monsieur, three days before war was declared."

"Where was that?"

"It was in Saxony, monsieur. I would not want to say too closely, my wife and children are still there, and it would be bad for them. But it was not far from Dresden."

"Where your wife and children also made prisoners?"

"My wife is German and my children were born in Germany."

"And how long have you lived in Germany?"

"Fifteen years."

"But you have come home every year?"

"To do my training."

"And now you have escaped and come back to France."

"To fight for France," he said.

I marveled at that small man with the little bald spot, the stubby gray beard, the sickly pallor and the baggy trousers that were too long for him.

"How old are you?" I asked.

"Forty-two years since last month, monsieur," he replied.

"I am a tailor."

I could no longer be astonished. "Were there many prisoners in your camp?" I asked.

"At first there were not very many," he said. "But soon they began to bring in soldiers, French, Russian and English, and then there were very many of us. They did not treat us very well except when the American ambassador came to inspect the camp. We were well treated and well fed then, but after he had gone we lived on bread and water for a week to make up for the expense while he was there."

"Did you have to work?"

"Only the French. The English and Russians did not have to work, but they built a factory for making asphyxiating gas shells and the French prisoners had to work in that factory."

"Did you work in it?"

"I wrecked it three times," he replied. "It made 40,000 shells a week. The first time I damaged the furnace, and it took them four days to repair it. Then I spoiled the acid tanks and they ran for more than four weeks, making shells that were worthless before they found it out. The third time I wrecked the furnace again and it took three days to repair it. But then they began to suspect me, monsieur. They watched me too closely, I could be of no more use there, and—well, drew a plan of the factory and escaped. It is for that plan that the government has given me fifteen days' leave before I join my regiment."

"Was it hard to get away?"

"My wife did not want me to go. She was afraid they would capture me and shoot me."

"Your wife?"

"Yes," he replied. "When I escaped from the camp I went to say good-by to my wife and children. My wife cried and begged me to go back and give myself up. She said I was sure to be captured and then I would be shot. But her sister came in while I was there. Her sister's husband and his two brothers are fighting in the German army. One of his brothers has been wounded and has the Iron Cross. And she said that I was right to go. She said that I was French, and it was right for me to want to fight for France. She told my wife to let me go. So I kissed my wife and children and came back to France."

"It was in June that I escaped, and they caught me just as I got to the Swiss border and started to take me back again. But I escaped once more and this time got here. It took me two months."

"Haven't you done enough?" I asked. "Do you want to fight now?"

"Oh!" he cried, raising his clenched fists, "give me a gun and a bayonet in my hands!"

INVENTS POCKET WIRELESS

New York Man Has Apparatus That Sends and Receives Messages at Distance of 18 Miles.

Dr. H. Harrington Cox of Bedford Hills, N. Y., has invented a compact and efficient wireless receiving and sending apparatus which may be strapped about the waist and safely hidden in the folds of a cloak so that it would be invisible to an unsuspecting person. The sending apparatus consists of a box in which



are five dry cells and a vibrator. The electric pulsations are started by tapping a telegraph key, and the current which the doctor says is modified with a hidden transformer of his invention, sends out its messages in waves long and short. The equivalent to a half watt or one-eighth of an ampere is required for the ordinary electric light bulb is the amount of electricity necessary. From the box projects a wire. In warfare use this wire is carried down the leg of the soldier, and connected with a metal plate or spur in the shoe. The receiving instrument consists of a drum about which is a coil of wire. On top of this is a very fine deflector. It has a pair of pie pieces such as are worn by telephone operators. Doctor Cox can send and receive messages by his instrument over a distance of 18 miles. The picture shows Doctor Cox with his cane (or receiver) raised for a message.

SEEK SQUAWS AS BRIDES

Mexicans Make Love to Indian Maids Who Own Land in State of Wisconsin.

Ashland, Wis.—C. E. Redfield of Santa Clara, Cal., allotting agent for the United States government, here to allot 35,000 acres on the Bad River reservation to 545 members of the tribe, brought from California a bundle of applications from Mexico for Chippewa brides.

But he thinks the Mexicans are seeking the squaws more for the sake of the land than any personal endowments.

STORES OLD VIOLINS IN BANK

Baltimore Society Man Thinks Hobby Will Some Day Make Him Rich.

Baltimore.—In the vaults of the Mercantile Trust company, where thousands of dollars' worth of securities and other valuables lie, more than a score of violins have been packed away by Frank Della Torre, a prominent society man. In twenty years, Torre thinks the instruments will be worth \$4,000 or \$5,000 each.

Brick Cures Crosse's Eye.

Natchez, Miss.—When Charlie Wright went into a fight with another boy Wright had a badly crossed eye which had been defective since birth. The enemy buried a half brick at Wright, bruising his cheek, but it permanently straightened the crossed optic.

POISON GAS TO KILL PESTS

San Angelo, Tex.—Killing prairie dogs with gas is the newest and most successful method of warfare against the western pests, according to reports from the infested country near here.

Chlorine gas from a large automobile generator is forced into the holes through a hose. The hole is then quickly covered and the occupant, be it prairie dog, ground squirrel or snake, immediately dies.



Lady Nicotine of Chicago Wins an Oklahoman

CHICAGO.—"A woman is only a woman," quoted Edward A. Kaselle of Tulsa, Okla., from Kipling, "but a good cigar is a smoke." "That being the case," replied his friend, Clifford Outhouse of the auditing staff of the Hotel Sherman, "come on down and I'll buy you a good one."

Of course he meant a cigar. So the twain descended to the cigar stand, which was presided over by a blonde Lady Nicotine, whose real name is Mayme Hoskins. "What'll you have?" queried Out-

house. But the mind of Kaselle had strayed from Havana to Arcadia at sight of Miss Hoskins. He mopped his fevered brow with the quarter cigar Outhouse had purchased for him and essayed to smoke his handker-

chief. Every day after that he earned the respect and admiration of "Front" and his brethren by the princely manner in which he purchased cigars and cigarettes.

Finally Mr. Kaselle told of his affection and promised faithfully if she would say "yes" he would keep the smoke out of the curtains. And Miss Hoskins could not gainsay her cavalier.

But, alas, the money he had spent in the purchase of cigars and cigarettes since he began his suit had eaten up all his available cash.

So Young Lochinvar, who had come out of the West like the original, had to go back to recuperate his broken fortunes. For several months he toiled and spun and smoked "three-fer" stogies. Then fortune smiled on him and he struck oil on an Oklahoma farm.

The other day Miss Hoskins received the following telegram: "Come to Tulsa right away. Bring a box of my favorite cigars. We'll get married right away."

Gotham Girls Find New Ways of Making Money

NEW YORK.—Some of the young women who work their way while studying in this city have found new fields for earning more money than the women employed along regular lines. "I am a visiting bootblack," declared

a young western girl who occupies a flat on the upper West side. "Yes, I do other things besides blacking boots, but it was that particular branch of my trade which attracted attention and got me my clientele. I mend and clean gloves and renovate the wardrobes of men, women, children and dogs. My clients all admit that it was the bootblack that attracted them. Women hate to go to a bootblack and sit in their high chairs while they have shoes polished. I learned this from one woman, so I had some cards printed which read: 'Visiting boot-black and valet.' Then I went to prosperous-looking apartment hotels, and after finding out the names of the residents, sent up my card."

Across the hall in the same flat house live three more girls who are working their way. One is from Pennsylvania, one from Texas and the third from up state. "I clean parlors," said the New York girl. "I suppose you might call me a visiting parlor maid, for that is just what I am. There are many ladies who live in apartment hotels who, while they cannot afford to keep a personal maid, are willing to pay someone to come once a week to give their rooms a thorough cleaning. There I come in." The girl from Pennsylvania found her field in the apartment houses with kitchenettes as a cook and general houseworker. She has all the work she can do, and declares that she is well paid for it. "My work is buying and selling second-hand lace and jewelry," the girl from Texas admitted. "I didn't originate the work. It might be called an inheritance. I make a good living out of it."

No Wonder Reading Residents Used More Water

READING, PA.—For some weeks the city water bureau noticed an amazing increase in the amount of water used in this city. Inspectors and registrars alike were unable to account for it. People who seldom used water except to wash in had been indulging in amazing quantities. Men who had not used it as a tippie for a long time had been forsaking bars and clinging to water attachments in public places in lieu of pumps.

Analyses of the water discovered a peculiar taste. It was like three fingers of bourbon diluted to the eighth degree. This failed to solve the mystery, however, as no one supposed for a moment that a distillery had been located near any of the reservoirs, nor that the local W. C. T. U. had been carrying on a Carrie Nation crusade in the neighborhood of the numerous city dams.

By accident the key to the puzzle was found. One of the inspectors of the state health board, patrolling the water shed, found several cider mills along the Maiden creek, which supplies the city, were dumping the waste and pulp from the apples used in making cider into the stream. This pulp, fermenting in the shallow places, produced the alcoholic juice that lent its peculiar applejack flavor later noticed in the city water.

Even the fish showed the effects. Fishermen reported that the fish would not bite, but seemed to be running around recklessly in the water and indulging in antics that no fish in its right mind would think of.

Cupid Is Banished by Topeka Y. W. C. A. Official

TOPEKA, KAN.—A Pennsylvania girl, Miss Clare Armstrong, has the distinction of having chased Cupid out of the Topeka Young Woman's Christian Association building. Miss Armstrong recently reached Topeka and the day she came Cupid had to get out and stay out. She tore up Cupid's parlor and turned it into a matter-of-fact office.

The trouble all started several months ago when Miss Margaret Dice, then secretary of the association, announced one day that Cupid's parlor was to be abolished. Cupid's parlor consisted of a small room on the main floor which had been dedicated since the erection of the building to the use of the young women who roomed at the building as a place in which to entertain their men friends. It was properly equipped with big rocking chairs, soft settees and cosy nooks and there was a pair of curtains hanging at the door which could be drawn almost but not quite together.

There was a storm of protest. The girls threatened to go on a strike. Many of them said they would leave the building if the beau parlor was taken away. Miss Dice consented to wait until the arrival of Miss Armstrong. But that young lady, upon her arrival, gave Cupid the final swat.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS

Idle curiosity is the busiest thing on earth. Never form your opinion of an egg until the lid is off.

At the sound of a dinner bell great minds run in the same channel.

A man isn't necessarily bashful because he declines to meet his obligations.

You can usually ascertain a woman's real age by asking some other woman.

A wise man does his duty; a fool does his friends.

When a man begins dodging his creditors he realizes how small the world is.

Source of inspiration. "How did that dramatic critic come to write such an unqualified roast of our new play?" exclaimed the manager.

"Maybe," replied the author, "he overheard some of the things you said to me about it."